

ABSTRACT

How to Grow Project Scientists: A systematic approach to developing project scientists.

The Project Manager is one of the key individuals that can determine the success or failure of a project. NASA is fully committed to the training and development of Project Managers across the agency to ensure that highly capable individuals are equipped with the competencies and experience to successfully lead a project. An equally critical position is that of the Project Scientist. The Project Scientist provides the scientific leadership necessary for the scientific success of a project by insuring that the mission meets or exceeds the scientific requirements. Traditionally, NASA Goddard project scientists were appointed and approved by the Center Science Director based on their knowledge, experience, and other qualifications. However the process to obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities was not documented or done in a systematic way. NASA Goddard's current Science Director, Nicholas White saw the need to create a pipeline for developing new projects scientists, and appointed a team to develop a process for training potential project scientists. The team members were Dr. Harley Thronson, Chair, Dr. Howard Kea, Mr. Mark Goldman, DACUM facilitator and the late Dr. Michael VanSteenberg. The DACUM process, an occupational analysis and evaluation system, was used to produce a picture of the project scientist's duties, tasks, knowledge, and skills. The output resulted in a 3-Day introductory course detailing all the required knowledge, skills and abilities a scientist must develop over time to be qualified for selections as a Project Scientist.